

Posted December 15, 2006

GROCERY STORES AND GROWING PAINS

The City is in the final stage of an agreement with Underwood Financial, LLC, the owner of property located at the southeast corner of W. White Street and CR 367, that will permit the development of the 25 acre tract for a major retail development. This development will include a full service grocery store (pharmacy, bakery, deli) and several additional stand-alone retail and commercial building sites. Site development has started on the project and the grocery store is expected to be open in August or September, 2007.

While the grocery store and other retail development is welcomed, it will come with some short term pain and disruption. To provide access to the retail development and to Sue Rattan Elementary School, located immediately south of the retail center, the City will be completely reconstructing CR 367. The new street will be a two-lane, curb and gutter urban roadway from W. White Street/FM 455 to the south side of the school. The new street will be named Ferguson Parkway and will ultimately be a 6-lane divided thoroughfare from the north side of the city to the south end of the city.

In addition and during the same time period, W. White Street will also be undergoing significant construction work. The street in front of the retail center will be expanded to allow for turn lanes into the center and at Ferguson Parkway. In addition, a traffic signal will probably be installed at the intersection of Ferguson Parkway and W. White.

The construction on Ferguson Parkway and W. White Street will occur over a 60-90 day period, although it may seem like 6-9 years. Your patience will be needed during construction. There are alternate routes around this area. Using alternate routes, even if inconvenient, would help us finish these construction projects more rapidly and reduce the length of the inconvenience for everyone. It is critical that the road construction be completed prior to August 1, 2007, so that traffic is flowing smoothly at the beginning of the school year and for the opening of the retail center.